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## The Great Opportunity To-Morrow.

For the election of to-morrow there was a diminished registration of voters in the city of New York, as compared with past elections during recent years, probably because citizens of a narrow and superficial view regarded it of less importance than usual, as being apart from the contests which affect great questions and issues of national politics. No election in New York, more especially since 1896, has been without such consequences, however, and that of to-morrow, taking place only one year before the momentous national election to occur in 1900, will actually be of signal national importance, or rather it should have been made so by the registration of every intelligent elector in the greater New York.

To the shame and disgrace of New York, which should always be the leader in the protection of the national honor and credit, as it is the financial and commercial leader of America, it has neglected steadily its duty and failed to exercise its proper function as such at the election which has already been succeeded that of 1896 when, for once, it nobly sustained the financial integrity and security of the Nation, upon which its own prosperity depends. In 1896, to its lasting dishonor, it defeated every candidate for Congress who pledged himself to the support of the single gold standard and elected an entire delegation which will be counted on the other side, with the consequence that the gold majority in the House of Representatives in the coming Congress will be narrow. The great commercial and financial capital of America will not have a single spokesman in that body to proclaim and defend its convictions and interests, and to bind up with the gold standard. The State of New York will be represented by two Senators who will battle resolutely for gold, but if the great majority of the voters of the city of New York had had their vote and the State had not withstood them successfully, its financial interests would have had no defence in the Senate also.

To-morrow, it is true, Congressmen are not to be elected, but there still enters into the election a national issue of supreme importance, which should be an animating and a controlling influence with every American, more especially with the citizens of New York. It needs no argument to prove to any intelligent man that more than any other community of the Union New York's welfare is vitally concerned in the national expansion which has come from the war with Spain. Its own full and proper development depends upon successful persistence in the policy of expansion upon which the National Administration has entered; yet how many of the men who have made ready to vote to-morrow have risen to any adequate conception of its inestimable value to the whole Republic and particularly to New York? If this city had anything like an intelligent understanding of its own interests and its vital concern in the success of that policy of territorial and commercial expansion, throwing aside all thought of every issue, it would respect the vote of every elector, and would not to-morrow a sweeping Republican majority to-morrow.

We do not need to urge the readers of THE SUN to discharge their duty of voting to-morrow, but we may set them to thinking more seriously of the grave and special importance of an election at this time, in view of the tremendous importance of the questions and problems now before the American people for settlement; and we may profitably remind them of the privilege and opportunity they will enjoy of helping to shape the future of their country and give a higher and grander dignity to American citizenship. That is the feeling which every elector should go to the ballot box to-morrow.

## The Peril of the British Ministry.

That the reverses recently suffered by the British in South Africa forebode the ultimate failure in their war against the Boers, no reason exists for supposing. The worst that can happen to them is a prolongation of the war beyond the limit of time they originally set for it and an increase of its cost beyond their preliminary estimates. Even the loss of Ladysmith, with its army and its munitions of war, which now seems imminent, will only delay, without averting, the final subjection of the Transvaal Republic. Numbers and resources are too preponderantly in favor of the British, and their determination to win, at any cost money and life, has been too thoroughly aroused by the defeats for them to give up the contest before they have carried it to a successful issue.

With the Ministry now in power in Great Britain, which is responsible for the outbreak of the war and has assumed the task of carrying it on, the case is different. Thus far, it has been loyal and even heartily supported both by its political opponents and by its own party. Everything it has asked for has been ungrudgingly granted by Parliament, and popular enthusiasm has been almost universally manifested in its favor. In return, the British people expect it to show an ability to accomplish what it has undertaken, which shall justify the confidence they have placed in it. If they are disappointed in this respect, or even if they are disappointed in its speedily fulfilled, it will have to retire and give place to one more competent.

In many points, the circumstances of this war with the Boers resemble those of the early days of the war against Russia in 1854 and 1855. Then, as now, the leaders of the British Government earnestly desired to avoid war. They were pushed into it by their energetic representative at Constantinople, as those of the present Government have been pushed into it by their Colonial Secretary, Lord ABERDEEN and his colleague, Mr. GLADSTONE, backed by the Emperor of Russia to yield his claims respecting the holy places at Jerusalem, was not inconsistent with the preservation of peace, but Lord STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, who conducted the negotiations with the Russian Ambassador, was determined upon having a war, and carried his point. So now Lord SALISBURY

and his colleagues, though notoriously men of peace, have been led by JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN into approving measures which inevitably tended to war, and war has come. Worse than this, the war has come, as it did in 1854, with Great Britain only partially prepared for it, and the consequences have been similar.

The mismanagement of the invasion of the Crimea, the military failures that attended the early stages, and the sufferings of the army encamped around Sebastopol, so aroused the anger and the indignation of the British people that Lord ABERDEEN'S Ministry was compelled to resign and to allow that of Lord PALMERSTON to succeed it. The result was, as we know, the capture of Sebastopol and the acknowledgment by the Emperor of Russia of his defeat. Will the mismanagement of the present Ministry and the reverses sustained in South Africa lead to a like resignation by Lord SALISBURY and his colleagues, and will it be followed by a more energetic and successful conduct of the war against the Boers?

The British press is already giving utterance to the discontent of the people with the Salisbury ministry. It is beginning to be seen that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN has been allowed altogether too free a hand in his dealings with President Kruger, which have goaded the Boers into a declaration of war, and that he is either ignorant of the military strength of the Transvaal, or egregiously underrated it. His colleague, Lord LANSDOWNE, the Secretary for War, would seem from his speech at Sheffield, last Thursday, to have been equally ignorant and equally deceived. He excused his want of readiness for the war by asserting that while diplomacy was conducted by wire, troops could be moved only in steamers. Hence, he said, in effect, that war could not be a matter of a word and a blow, with the blow first, but that the word must necessarily precede the blow long enough for its intended object to prepare to receive it. The Boers have shown that they are not of this view of the matter. It now appears that months before they began negotiating with Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, they had amply provided themselves with arms and ammunition, and got their army ready, so that the blow which they threatened came as quickly as did the word that accompanied it.

Besides all this, the British people will soon be asking themselves, as some of the leaders of the Opposition have already asked, why the war was provoked at all. So far as can be judged from the facts known, no necessity existed for precipitating a solution of the controversy with the Boers over the franchise for the Uitlanders. In the natural course of events the solution would have come peaceably by the increased numbers of the Uitlanders, and the Boers would have had to grant them their demands. It looks as though Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had aimed more at his own glorification as the champion of Great Britain, and the political distinction that would follow his coercion of the Transvaal, than the real interests of the nation. He appears to have counted upon a speedy submission of the Boer Government to a show of force, and to have been caught in a trap of his own contriving. When the mourners for the killed shall have grown from hundreds to thousands, and when the taxes to pay for the war mount into the millions, he will be the most execrated man in the land, and his colleagues, if no signal victories come speedily to rescue them, will share in the hatred he will inspire.

Not the British Empire, but the British Ministry, is now in peril. Whether or not they will escape it events only will show.

## British Military Weaknesses.

It is too early and our information is yet too little for any authoritative criticism of Sir GEORGE WHITE'S plan of action in his fight with the Boers, either as a whole or in detail. We have no precise and authentic account of what really happened to the unfortunate left column, or why it happened; and it is only just to withhold blame or praise until we know on which side they should be given. We are only justified in saying that the indications are unfortunate.

High Continental military authorities and even some British observers, it is true, long ago predicted that on the first occasion on which British troops met a white foe they would be defeated. The reasons for this judgment were that all their experience, like that of the French before the Franco-German War, had been against Asiatics and Africans, poorly armed and indifferently organized, except with the Boers alone, but the British General Staff looked upon the affairs of 1881 in the Transvaal as purely exceptional, if not merely accidental, and they believed at the outset of the present war that the Boers of to-day were not up to any fight. That, obviously, was the assumption of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN also. They all know better now. Sir GEORGE WHITE himself, before leaving England and immediately after his arrival in Natal, is said to have expressed the opinion that the war with the troops then in South Africa would be speedily ended. He also knows better now.

The truth, however, is that the defects of the British army are not the outcome of any one cause, but lie deep in the social system of England. The system of land tenure and the development of industry and commerce have depleted the fields and built up the urban and manufacturing population at the cost of the morale and physique of the mass of the people. The last report on the recruiting of the British army shows the standard of height to have been reduced to 5 feet 3 inches for the infantry. In order to get the ranks filled, and even then recruiting was found exceedingly difficult, owing to the numbers rejected for constitutional and physical defects. Now, too, reports from London are that, though recruiting is pushed vigorously throughout the United Kingdom, the results are disappointing and the physical requirements are being lowered. Regiments so composed were not likely to force men like the Boers into swift submission—men of fine physical development, animated by strong religious fervor, and fighting in defence of their homes and their liberties. It may even be questioned if it would be possible for the British regiments to beat the Boers at all, except for their vastly superior resources of scientific and mechanical skill and their practically unlimited resources in money, if England is prepared to persist in the war to the bitter end. At best, a long conflict, costly in lives and treasure, seems now to be obvious.

Another thing from which the British army suffers, is known rather than talked about. It is the vicious system of favoritism in the staff and in the commands. During the latter part of the tenure of the Commander-in-Chiefship by the Duke of CAMBRIDGE, there were three "rings" in the army, known as the Cambridge, the Wolsey, and the Roberts rings. The first was the aristocratic and court ring; the second

was composed of the military purists and severe disciplinarians, with leanings toward the Continental system of army organization, to which the short service plan was only the first step; the third ring, found in the army itself, was the one to give to the Boers, and wishes, the other two antagonistic, holding it by compromise between themselves against the third. The Cambridge ring still exists, though the Duke himself is no longer at the head of the army. It is made up of those officers, mostly belonging to aristocratic or wealthy families, who are always sent out on special service and have the mysterious letters "D. S. O." attached to their names. The fact or suspicion of favors and opportunities showered on them by a partial military administration is the cause of perpetual heartburning to regimental officers who are without powerful family connections or wealth to push them on.

The popularity of Lord ROBERTS in the army is undeniable, and deservedly so, for not only is he a good soldier, but he has the faculty of winning the regard of the regimental officers and of the rank and file; yet under present conditions his superlative merits, apparently, are without weight. A supposedly easy war with the Boers, it is believed in many military circles, was thought to be a good opportunity to push the fortunes of the other rings. South Africa, however, had already been the grave of many military reputations, CHIEFSPURD and COLLEY among the last, and the indications now are that others will follow. Among the Generals going out to South Africa are some who have the reputation of being excellent manipulators of the Kriegspiel board, as professors of the art of war, but it remains to be seen how they will perform in the only face of the ordeal of actual conflict against the Boer commanders. The military genius has yet to be discovered on the British side, but in the test of such a war as that of South Africa he may at any time blaze forth to the confusion of the chess-board strategy and tactics of the hide-bound military school, as we found out in our War of the Revolution and the Civil War and as was demonstrated in the earlier campaigns of the French Revolution and in Napoleon's campaign against the old Austrian potent, WURMBERG, in Italy.

It is assumed that, notwithstanding the present advantages on the Boer side and the shortcomings on that of the British, the Boers are sure to be beaten in the end. Probably that is so, but the war will not end in a way that they are doing in commerce and in almost every sphere of human action, and the weaker and less progressive have little show; but, apparently, the British campaign will have to begin afresh, with new troops, if not new Generals, and with increased difficulties before them.

## End of the Colonel's Campaign.

Col. WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN'S weeks of whizzing through Nebraska have ended. Hoarse, but happy in the knowledge that he holds the quantitative record for spouting, the Colonel returns to Lincoln to wait and wait for the harvest of his toils. He has wept at Weeping Water over imperialism and the Money Power. He has shot at the Octopus in Broken Bow and missed him. He has wandered in the dark and all but buried his eloquent lips in the shallow and muddy Platte. He has talked the candles out in Holdrege. In the very heat and fury of his discourse at Ravenna, the ice has formed in a pitcher placed on his desk for refreshment of the eloquent lips. He has been tipped over and thrown out of his carriage. But he loves hardship. That is the reason he resigned from the army.

We should say that the Colonel had been thoroughly perturbed by the unfortunate prosperity of his State and the enthusiasm of the Republicans, were it not that perturbation is his normal condition. A man who never travels without a crisis is bound to be perturbed. Besides, the Colonel trembles for the Declaration of Independence. Very unnecessarily. The cohorts of imperialism trample on that document, the Colonel will still have the Chicago platform, which he says is a second Declaration of Independence, to fall back upon.

In Nebraska still true to his JEFFERSON? The odds ought to be in his favor, in spite of his evident alarm, in spite of his speeches, which are notoriously sure specifics for reducing votes, and in spite of the Hon. JOHN PARDON ALTHELD, who has been trying to persuade the Nebraskans that they can't be well off without sixteen to one. Nebraska may say of the Colonel as TOUCHESSORE said of AUBREY, "An ill-favored fellow, sir, but no fine own."

The Colonel among Republicans? They could be almost sorry to see Nebraska and the Democratic dump him. His voice is so familiar and he will be so easy to beat.

## Railroads in Africa.

On the day the Boers declared war there were in operation in Africa nearly 12,000 miles of railroad. At the end of 1890 the mileage for the entire continent was only 5,813 miles. In the past eight years it has more than doubled, 5,972 miles of new roads having been put into operation. Some of these roads are now being extended, work has begun on a few new enterprises, and these extensions and new lines, for whose completion financial arrangements have been made, will add about 2,500 miles to the total. Then there are other projects, such as the German road to Tanganyika, the French road from Algeria to the Sudan, and the Belgian road from the Congo to the Nile, all Government schemes and not yet under way. It is probably a conservative estimate to say that the end of the next decade will see 25,000 miles of railroad in operation.

The Colonial Council at Berlin was informed, on Oct. 10, that the Imperial Government had decided to build the East African Central Railroad and for this purpose would raise a loan at three and a half per cent. interest. The object of the Government in building the road itself is to hasten the development of the colony and also to have a free hand in the settlement of all questions that may arise when a junction is effected with the British road from Cape Town to Alexandria. The German Colonial Society has advocated this great project for some years, but the Reichstag has not been willing to guarantee interest upon the necessary capital; the funds, therefore, have not been raised.

The estimated cost of a narrow gauge railroad, with terminus on the Indian Ocean at Bagamoyo and Dar-es-Salaam, to Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika, with a branch from Tabora to the south end of Victoria Nyanza, is \$60,000,000. As a private enterprise it is deemed impracticable, but it is necessary for the development of German East Africa, which is over a third larger than Texas and

is believed to have double the population of that State. The British are rapidly building their railroad from the Indian Ocean to Victoria Nyanza and it is now about half completed. The same considerations that induced the enterprise of building of the neighboring German line. The two leading questions relating to Africa are no longer problematical, for the experience and study of a quarter of a century have affirmed definitely that it will pay to develop Africa and to build railroads.

No one dreamed, a few years ago, of the activity in railroad building which the last years of this century have witnessed. To say nothing of the rapid development of railroads in civilized north and south Africa, there are now in operation or under construction between the tropics twelve lines of railroad leading from the seacoasts into the interior. Besides these enterprises in tropical Africa, there are the north and south roads, such as the three Algerian lines pushing to or into the Sahara, all of them to be feeders of the future Trans-Saharan line, the road up the Nile, which has crossed the Atlas River on an American bridge and is now approaching Khartoum; and the line extending north from Bulawayo to Salisbury, which is to be another link in the road that is to join South Africa with the Mediterranean.

The day of the camel caravans and human portage is passing. The 40,000 pack carriers in the cataract region of the Congo have given place to freight cars. At twelve points along the tropical coast railroads now supplant the old trade routes for a considerable distance inland. The iron rails are coming nearer every day to the holy city of Harar, which a few years ago no infidel had ever entered except in disguise. The railroad is following the telegraph line to the capital of the King of SHARWA, Malindi territory north and south, the line now building from Suakim to Berber will cross it from east to west. Thus the era of the pioneer explorer has given place to the brighter day of the railroad, making all progress possible by bringing even the far interior of Africa into close touch with the rest of the world.

## The War Would Go on All the Same.

At an anti-imperialist meeting in Columbus, Ohio, Gen. JOHN BEATTY, a Republican, soothed of some local fame, poured forth this floodgate:

"Vote against the party which favors this war of criminal aggression on Tuesday, and the defeat of the Republican ticket in Ohio means that the war will stand as an expression of popular sentiment will be sure of its effect."

Gen. JOHN BEATTY ought to know, and probably does not know, that the duty of the President cannot be altered by the success or the failure of the Republican ticket in Ohio or anywhere else. The insurrection in the Philippines must be put down. The rights and title of the United States in the Philippines must be asserted. If Ohio were full of BEATTYS and LINTZES and voted against the Administration, the President would have no less and no more and nothing different to do in Luzon than he has to-day.

His futile and dishonoring schemes of voting to help the enemies of the country recall the alms of the Democratic party in 1864, helped them, as now, by a few sordid Republicans!

## In Mugwump Haven.

Col. CHARLES RUSSELL CODMAN of Massachusetts, a Mugwump of high degree, imparts to the Boston Herald, in a letter of due length and solemnity, the immense fact that he is going to vote for the Hon. ROBERT TRENT PAINE, Jr., the Democratic candidate for Governor. "Those of us," he writes, "who are of no party, or who place the country above party and who are in dead earnest, should vote for Mr. Paine. Thus Col. CODMAN, who is a Mugwump of high degree, imparts to the Boston Herald, in a letter of due length and solemnity, the immense fact that he is going to vote for the Hon. ROBERT TRENT PAINE, Jr., the Democratic candidate for Governor. "Those of us," he writes, "who are of no party, or who place the country above party and who are in dead earnest, should vote for Mr. Paine. Thus Col. CODMAN, who is a Mugwump of high degree, imparts to the Boston Herald, in a letter of due length and solemnity, the immense fact that he is going to vote for the Hon. 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